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SUBJECT: March 13 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: TIBET PROTESTS,

11. Key points at the March 13, 2008 regular MFA Press Briefing were:

-- In recent days a few monks in Lhasa have made "a disturbance" and tried to sow political unrest. China resolutely opposes the attempts of the "Dalai group" to split China and, thanks to efforts by the local government, "the situation has been stabilized."

-- China opposes the United States' issuance of the Human Rights report and its "point(ing) fingers" at other countries' human rights records while never reflecting on its own record. The Information Office of the State Council has issued its own human rights report to let others know that the United States also has human rights issues.

-- China is earnest and responsible in its adherence to its regulations regarding foreign journalists and relevant authorities have made tremendous efforts in carrying them out. It is undeniable that there are some problems with the implementation and enforcement of the regulations, but both the authorities and the journalists need to do a better job.

-- The Ministry of Public Security will send a team of poisoning experts and investigators to Japan for interviews with Japanese police on the dumpling poisoning case and for "relevant tests."

Tibet Protests

12. At the March 13 regular MFA press briefing, spokesperson Qin Gang said that in recent days a few monks in Lhasa had made "a disturbance" and tried to sow political unrest. He said the disturbance was a political scheme by the "Dalai group" and that the monks involved were attempting to split China and ruin the normal, peaceful and harmonious lives of the Tibetan people. Thanks to the efforts of the local government and the Democratic Administration Commission of the local temple, he said, "the situation has been stabilized."

13. Qin stressed that Tibet began democratic reform forty-nine years ago when millions of serfs were liberated. Tibet has witnessed great changes and it is the common aspiration of the Tibetan people to safeguard national unification, ethnic solidarity and social harmony. The "scheme" of the "Dalai group" is doomed because the development of Tibet cannot be blocked by any forces. The Chinese government and people's determination to safeguard territorial integrity is resolute, he said.

14. Asked about Tibetan protests in India, Qin reiterated that China resolutely opposes the "Dalai group's" efforts to engage in activities to separate China and ruin ethnic solidarity. No countries have recognized Tibet as an independent country and Tibet has been an inalienable part of China since ancient times. This stance is reflected in a promise made by the Indian government to China in which Indian officials said they would never support the "Dalai group's" separatist activities. He added that China hopes India will proceed in the interest of bilateral relations and honor its commitments to China.

15. In a follow-up answer, Qin acknowledged that there are some Tibetans that are trying to cross the border, but that China is resolutely opposed to their separatist activities. He said that Tibetans can come back to China if they admit that Tibet is part of China and that they are citizens of China.

Dueling Human Rights Reports

16. China resolutely opposes the United States' issuance of its annual Human Rights report and its "point(ing) fingers" at other countries' human rights records while never reflecting on its own record. "If it cannot rectify itself how can it rectify others?" The United States has no right to issue reports accusing others, he said. Qin said the Information Office of the State Council has issued its own human rights report to let others know that the United States also has human rights problems. It is natural for countries to have some human rights problems, but countries should have dialogue and communication on the basis of equality and mutual respect to mend differences. He stated that China resolutely opposes countries' exerting pressure and interfering in other countries' internal affairs in the name of human rights.

Rights of Foreign Journalists

17. Asked about the current environment in China for foreign journalists, Qin said that the regulations on the foreign media issued on January 1, 2007 honor Beijing's commitment to the Olympics. China is earnest and responsible in its adherence to these regulations and relevant authorities have made tremendous efforts in carrying them out. Any journalist without bias can see that in recent years the environment for foreign reporters in China

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is friendlier and the availability of services and facilities is growing. He characterized the general situation for the foreign media as "good."

18. Qin said it is undeniable that there are some problems with the implementation and enforcement of the regulations. China is a big country with a big population and different localities have different conditions. Better efforts from local governments are necessary, he said. However, China also believes that journalists involved in some cases should reflect on their own conduct. Some journalists don't respect people being interviewed, force people to be interviewed or distort facts. To better implement the regulations, create a better environment for foreign journalists and ensure that Chinese citizens remain willing to be interviewed by foreign reporters, the Chinese government should do a better job and journalists should reflect on themselves and do a better job as well.

Dumpling Investigation

19. After consultations between Chinese and Japanese police agencies, the Ministry of Public Security will send a team of poisoning experts and investigators to Japan for interviews with Japanese police on the investigation of the poisoned dumpling case and for "relevant tests." Qin said the trip is a good opportunity for police in the two countries to move ahead with the investigation, find out the truth and make a responsible assessment to the people and enterprises of the two countries.

South China Sea Negotiations

110. Asked if China agrees with a Japanese report calling for the resolution of the South China Sea issue in international courts, Qin said that China's position on the South China Sea is solidly based on international law. He said according to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea China and Japan should solve their disputes through negotiations and consultations. Both governments agree that it is a complicated issue that cannot be solved overnight and requires

patience and compromise from both sides.

Upcoming Visits

¶11. Qin announced a March 19-20 visit by Peruvian President Alan Garcia and said Garcia will meet with Hu Jintao, Chairman Wu Bangguo, Premier Wen Jiabao, CPC member Li Changchun and other central government leaders. He will exchange views on bilateral relations as well as regional and international issues of common interest. Qin characterized Peru as a good friend and partner of China.

¶12. Qin also announced a March 20-22 visit by South Korean Foreign Minister Yu Myung Hwan, saying that he would meet with FM Yang Jiechi and "other state leaders." Asked if President Hu would be traveling to Japan on May 8, Qin said that Foreign Ministries on both sides are still having active consultations regarding the visit and will release the relevant information in due course.